

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: November 8, 2012

Agenda Item: Dome Mountain Addition

Division/Bureau: Wildlife **Action Needed:** Final Approval

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 min.

Background

The Dome Mountain WMA addition project would add a small (23.76 - 31.53 acres) but critical piece of land to the current WMA. The acreage is an estimate at this point based on information that came up during the comment period indicating the county records are incorrect, and the actual acreage of the parcel closer to 23.76 acres, not 31.53. This came from a professional land surveyor based in Livingston who was familiar with the certificate of survey for the area. The recommendation is to go forward with the purchase, as the precise acreage is less important than the value of the piece for habitat conservation, and it is still priced well below market. FWP will address the county record error after the purchase. The parcel is located on a plateau (“Hepburn Mesa”) that is heavily used by wintering elk. The adjacent parcels below the plateau are subdivided and developed. By acquiring this parcel, the WMA will be extended to encompass the western boundary of the plateau, and subdivision and development on the plateau that is most heavily used by elk will be avoided. The habitat is relatively undisturbed, and provides good winter forage for elk and occasional mule deer. While elk will be most affected, this area is also used by mule deer and other shrub and grassland species. Public access will be extended to this land, providing additional hunting and other recreational opportunities during the portion of the year that the WMA is open (May 15 – Dec. 1). The adjacent lands to the south of the parcel and WMA are owned by Dome Mountain Ranch, which has no plans to develop its lands and is highly tolerant of winter elk use of their property.

Public Involvement Process & Results

An EA was issued with a public comment period scheduled from Sept. 21—Oct. 22. Generally there was support for the proposal. A copy of the EA and Decision Notice with summary of public comments will be provided prior to the commission meeting.

Alternatives and Analysis

None.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the commission give final approval for the purchase of this addition to the Dome Mountain WMA.

Proposed Motion

I move the FWP Commission give final approval for FWP to complete the purchase of the Dome Mountain WMA addition.